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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0913

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEES:

DEFENSE

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE

FINANCIAL SERVICES AND
GENERAL GOVERNMENT

SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEES:

SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

ENVIRONMENT

March 18, 2020

The Honorable Nancy D. Pelosi, Speaker
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chair
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Bobby Scott, Chair
House Committee on Education and Labor

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chair
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Maxine Waters, Chair
House Committee on Financial Services

The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chair
House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure

The Honorable Richard Neal, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Hoyer, Chair Lowey, Chair Scott, Chair Pallone, Chair Waters,
Chair DeFazio, and Chair Neal:

Thank you for your steadfast leadership during this national emergency. Under your leadership, the People's House has been on the forefront of improving the national response. As you work to craft the third COVID-19 response, I respectfully ask that you consider including the following provisions.

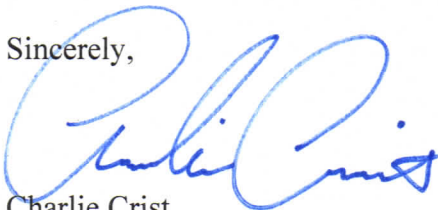
1. **COVID-19 healthcare assistant online training.** To address the looming spike in demand for healthcare workers, the Department of Health and Human Services should establish and fund an accelerated, online curriculum to train and certify COVID-19 healthcare assistants. Unemployed and furloughed workers could take accelerated, full-time online classes through colleges and universities to become a certified COVID-19 healthcare assistant. COVID-19 assistants could support the work of frontline doctors and nurses by providing lower-skilled care. This would not only provide employment opportunities for unemployed and furloughed workers but expand the capacity of the healthcare workforce to address the crisis.
2. **Base Unemployment Insurance and Paid Sick Leave benefit on a minimum of \$15/hour for tipped employees.** Given the underreporting of tips by the service industry (TIGTA estimates over \$6 billion in 2016), unemployment insurance and paid sick leave still leave tipped employees short. With restaurants and bars hit uniquely hard by the virus, tipped employees and their families stand to lose the most.
3. **Nationwide vote-by-mail.** As states grapple with holding elections amidst the coronavirus outbreak, election officials should be preparing to hold November's general

election exclusively by mail. Congress should provide grants to states to cover the costs of switching to vote by mail for the entire electorate to keep people safe and preserve confidence in our democracy.

4. **Expand LIHEAP.** Staying home from work will create an unexpected expense: higher electricity bills. Those in self-quarantine or mandatory quarantine could use double the electricity than those going to work. Congress could help by expanding the Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for those receiving paid sick leave and unemployment insurance. This proposal would lessen economic disruption for those who can least afford it and keep sick or quarantined folks from feeling like they have to work.
5. **Strengthen summer learning.** Each year millions of low-income students fall further and further behind because their families lack access to enrichment activities. The extended closures at schools will only further disrupt learning for these students, especially during the summer. Congress should direct additional Title I funds to universal summer school and expanded connectivity for in-home learning and development.
6. **Financial assistance for ports.** With services that significantly impact the economy (\$5.4 trillion) and national supply chain, the maritime transportation system has been hit hard by the crisis. Without stopgap measures to safeguard and support our maritime sector, including specific financial assistance to seaports, the economy will take longer to recover post-emergency. Downstream impacts will include shipping, transportation, and tourism.
7. **Emergency housing for homeless.** Individuals experiencing homelessness will be hit hardest by the coronavirus, putting them at increased risk and making treatment and containment difficult. Congress should create an emergency homeless voucher during the crisis that individuals experiencing homelessness can use in participating hotels.
8. **Travel and leisure bailouts must include consumer protections.** If taxpayers are being asked to bailout airlines and hotels, they need to do right by those taxpayers. Companies eligible for financial assistance should waive all change/cancellation fees and allow travelers to be fully refunded as long as the COVID-19 National Emergency is active and the company has fully reimbursed taxpayers.
9. **Green energy tax extenders, including the Solar Investment Tax Credit.** Clean energy industries are getting hit hard by COVID-19 delays and cancellations. In the case of solar and wind, these industries are also running up against tax credit deadlines. Clean energy tax credits provide immediate stimulus for our economy by supporting shovel-ready projects that can put people to work and move us forward on climate. If the package is going to include support for domestic oil and gas unrelated to the coronavirus pandemic, it must include support for renewable energy as well.

Thank you again for your leadership and your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist

UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN